

Afghan Schoolchildren Killed in Taliban Attack Crossfire

KABUL - Several Afghan students have died in crossfire from a Taliban attack on a police checkpoint, an official says. The rebel group now controls almost half of the country's districts, according to a US oversight authority.

At least four Afghan students aged between 10 and 16 were killed on Saturday after being caught in crossfire during Taliban attacks on police checkpoints near a school in eastern Ghazni province, a spokesman for the provincial governor said.

The spokesman, Arif Noori, told DW that 17 others, including 15 students and two teachers, were wounded when an explosion hit the school in Andar district. He said authorities were investigating who fired the projectile that hit the school. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

At least nine policemen were also killed in the attacks on the checkpoints and a follow-up ambush targeting other police rushing to the scene, officials say. Six were also reportedly wounded in the attacks. Peace efforts

The attacks come amid efforts by the United States to broker a peace accord between the Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan from 1996-2001 before being ousted in a US-led invasion, and the Kabul government. The Islamists, who have been waging a rebellion since their ouster, now control some 46 percent of the country's districts, up from 36 percent in 2017, according to the US government's Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

Officials said on Saturday that Taliban ... (More on P4)...(12)

Ghani, Abdullah Praise NATO's Chief Mandate Extended



KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani and his Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Abdullah Abdullah have commended Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg over the extension of his term as NATO chief.

President Ghani tweeted: "Congratulations Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on the extension of your term. By keeping their faith in you NATO allies have made a tremendous decision to modernize the alliance."

"With your continued support (SG Stoltenberg) Afghanistan will emerge a stronger ally in our strategic partnership," Ghani wrote.

The extension of NATO Secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg's mandate was a testament to his impressive leadership in ensuring NATO's responsiveness to imperatives of global security, CEO Abdullah also said in a tweet.

"We value our partnership with NATO, and congratulate our friend for the well-deserved recognition," he

added.

On Thursday, NATO allies agreed to extend Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's term by a further two years until late 2022.

"I am honoured by the decision by the NATO allies to extend my term as Secretary General until 30 September 2022," Stoltenberg said in a tweet.

Stoltenberg, 60, who took up the post on Oct. 1 2014, thanked the allies for putting their trust in him and said: "We face the ... (More on P4)...(10)

Militant Attacks on Oil Tankers Increasing in Baghlan



PUL-I-KHUMRI - Petroleum products businessmen say militant attacks on their private trucks have increased recently in northern Baghlan province, inflicting millions of afghani losses on them.

Haji Asadullah, deputy head of the Oil Tankers Union in Baghlan, told Pajhwok Afghan News that attacks on their tankers had surged over the past one week.

He said if these attacks did not stop, their business would suffer more losses and the price of petroleum products would increase.

Representing the northeastern zone's oil tankers, he met with security officials who assured of their full support to oil tankers.

Oil tanker drivers on the northern highway also claim attacks on them have increased in Dand Ghori and Kelagi localities.

Zeri Gul, a driver, told Pajhwok Afghan News in the past he would travel at night on the highway because of no insecurity, but now they were unable to drive during day time without security forces escort.

The residents of Dand-i-Ghori locality also expressed concern over the growing insecurity and said 10 oil tankers had been ... (More on P4)...(11)

Badakhshan's Arghanchkwa District Falls to Taliban



FAIZABAD - Taliban insurgents have captured Arghanchkwa district of northeastern Badakhshan province, an official said on Saturday.

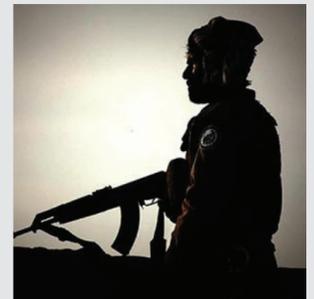
Abdullah Naji Nazari, a member of provincial council, told Pajhwok Afghan News the militants overran the Arghanchkwa district on Friday night.

At least 14 security forces, including public

uprising group members, were killed and 10 others wounded as a result of clashes on Friday. Other besieged security forces fled the area taking advantage of darkness, he added.

Taliban also claimed capturing the district's police headquarters and said 13 security personnel, including two commanders, had been killed in the overnight assault. (Pajhwok)

13 Taliban, 4 Police Killed in Kandahar Clashes



KANDAHAR CITY - At least 13 Taliban militants and four police personnel have been killed in two separate incidents of violence in southern Kandahar province, an official said on Saturday.

Another 12 insurgents and two policemen were wounded after militants stormed security check-posts in Maiwand and Khakrez districts, said Aziz Ahmad Azizi, the governor's spokesman.

He said the overnight clash in Band Timor locality of Maiwand district left five Taliban militants and three policemen dead and three insurgents and one policeman wounded.

Separately, militants stormed a security check-post in Khakrez district late Friday night, according to Azizi, who added eight Taliban militants and one policeman had

been killed and nine militants and a second policeman wounded in the nighttime clash.

However, Taliban spokesman Qari Yusuf Ahmadi claimed the fighters killed seven police and captured a check-post in Maiwand district late Friday night. (Pajhwok)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Friends or a group with which you're affiliated could propose a trip. This might seem like a great adventure, Aries, so you're likely to go for it. You will probably have a wonderful time. You might make some new friends while you're away, or even fall in love. A little break might fire your enthusiasm for pursuing career or educational opportunities when

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



An opportunity to do some extra work outside the scope of your regular job could present itself to you. Take it, Taurus. Not only could you earn some extra money but you might also open new doors that expand your professional horizons. The only danger is that you might work too hard and tire yourself out. It's OK

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



You might be extremely busy now. Invitations to large parties, small gatherings with close friends, and intimate evenings with romantic partners might come up today. Be discriminating in those you accept, Gemini. Concentrate on seeing people who share your interests. This may bring new friends your way, as well as opportunities to expand your horizons. Romance looks great now.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



Unexpected visitors could wake you up to the possibility of new work opportunities, Cancer. This could advance your current job or be work you can do on your own - maybe on a volunteer basis. Whatever it is, you will probably find it exciting. You might even be impatient to get on with it. Pace yourself. If you tire yourself out, you won't be able

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



If you aren't romantically involved, an errand, walk, or other foray into your neighborhood might bring an exciting new person into your life. This encounter may or may not lead to something lasting, Leo, but you will enjoy it anyway! If you're currently involved, a casual outing with your partner could result in intimate conversations that

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Money that you may have been hoping to use to better your living or working condition could suddenly come your way today, Virgo. Ideas for how to put it to work in the most efficient, satisfying way could pop into your mind quickly. You will probably want to write them all down, consider your options carefully, and then choose the ones that suit your needs best. Go to it.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



When you run errands today, check the bulletin boards in local businesses. You may have been longing for adventure and dreaming about getting away from it all, Libra, but today you might find the excitement you crave right in your community. New events, people, and businesses that you will enjoy could be moving in.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



Information received today excites your imagination and encourages you to start a new artistic or creative project, Scorpio. Stories, pictures, abstract concepts - all could come together in your mind and form an inspired idea that could change your life. Gird your loins, write down your thoughts, and see where it all takes you. You might be surprised by what you produce!

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



Adventure is the word for today, Sagittarius. A lot of physical and mental energy, as well as enthusiasm, might lead you to aim for goals that others consider too risky or unrealistic. Don't let their opinions stop you. After giving each idea an objective assessment, if you still believe you want to try, start looking into it seriously. People have probably made stranger dreams than this come true!

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



New career goals may come your way with the current aspect, Capricorn, opening up possibilities you may not have considered. This could be very exciting. It might even work toward the fulfillment of childhood dreams that you abandoned long ago. They may involve the arts, modern technology, or both.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

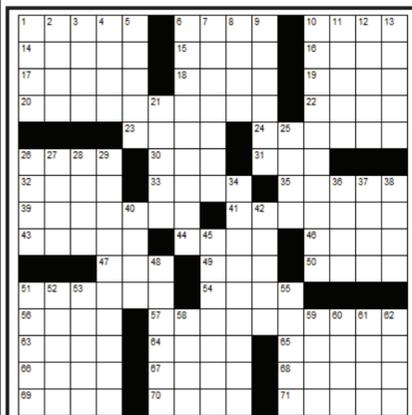


Fascinating new information could arrive today from TV or the Internet, opening up new educational opportunities. The possibility of making contact and perhaps visiting new friends in other countries might come to your attention. You will probably find this very exciting, Aquarius, and make plans immediately. This is fine, but be careful to consider all contingencies.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



A sudden burst of physical energy and determination could lead to additional income for you, Pisces. This is probably due to an unexpected opportunity to do some extra work outside the scope of your usual employment. It could also be a long overdue payment for past work. You could also receive acknowledgement of some kind for work well done, further firing your enthusiasm. Go for the gold!



Across

- Challenger, 6. Hens make them, 10. Steals, 14. Betel palm, 15. German for "Madam", 16. Wicked, 17. Standards, 18. Tumbled, 19. A goddess of healing, 20. Enteric, 22. Varieties, 23. Killer whale, 24. Catch in a net, 26. Happy, 30. Abet, 31. Born as, 32. Cartoon bear, 33. C C C C, 35. Prank, 39. Make "not smooth", 41. The infliction of pain, 43. A drama set to music, 44. Streetcar, 46. Beers, 47. Antlered animal, 49. Consumed food, 50. Young girl, 51. Dark purple plum, 54. Jests, 56. 1 1 1 1, 57. Bowels, 63. Sandwich shop, 64. Urarthritis, 65. Something to shoot for, 66. Margarine, 67. Male deer, 68. Plant life, 69. Observed, 70. You (archaic), 71. Bogy,

Down

- Hindu princess, 2. Press, 3. Green, 4. Cap, 5. Lariat, 6. Efficacious, 7. Explosive device, 8. Big party, 9. Clum, 10. Belonging to a regiment, 11. Small egg, 12. Swindles, 13. Gash, 21. Small amount, 25. Close, 26. Greek sandwich, 27. Coil, 28. Chills and fever, 29. Wandering from the main path, 34. Figurine, 36. A city in western Russia, 37. Angers, 38. To tax or access, 40. Angel's headwear, 42. Portents, 45. Ecstasy, 48. Chess piece, 51. Blockheads, 52. Anoint (archaic), 53. Donnybrook, 55. Rigid, 58. Ark builder, 59. Doing nothing, 60. A noble gas, 61. Acquire deservedly, 62. Kill,

Yesterday's Solution

EUROPS, BUBBA, DITSHI, PLANT, ARGIA, TINGO, INTERNALLY, SCAM, CASISIA, AASIS, SURE, AGENT, BORIS, GOBI, EDEMETIC, EARMARK, RADIATE, STEPPED, GEARING, THEOREM, FITTING, SEDUCE, EASY, AMISS, STIZES, RANI, BIT, BOUGIE, CLUB, ACROBATIC, EARL LAUD, PALES, DRIE, ELSIE, SHADIE

animal, available, block bullet, catch, chill contact, craft deer, excite, fakes, filter float, intervene, messy nibble, officer, passage, peas personality, plaster prime, punch queen

M Q F P U N C H C T A C I
B Y T I L A N O S R E P N
C K E X C I T E R E G I T
O I D A R E K C O L B A E
N F S V A A L Z H B N M R
T R F A F H R P L I B V
A T L I T P W E M R L U E
C C O L C E A A P I J L N
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